

A report from the Nebraska Substance Abuse Treatment Task Force &
the Nebraska Law Enforcement Coordinating Committee
on the need and status of treatment for offenders in Nebraska

Needs and Status of Treatment: General Overview

- Treatment of addiction is as successful as the treatment for other chronic diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, and asthma as long as treatment “Best Practices” are implemented (NIDA, 1998).
- In Fiscal Year 1999/2000, the total amount of substance abuse treatment dollars in Nebraska was \$19,702,702. This is a 16.5% decrease in funding since 1992. (This comparison does account for inflation).
- For every dollar spent on treatment, society saves four to seven dollars in drug-related crime and criminal justice costs (Gernstein & Johnson, 1994).
- Individuals who enter treatment involuntarily under the legal system have outcomes as favorable as those who enter treatment voluntarily (NIDA, 1998).
- We must stop low-level, nonviolent substance abusers from getting caught up in a revolving door of ineffective punishment. Sanctions and sentences for low-level, non-violent substance abusers must focus on treatment and rehabilitation as well as deterrence and separation. The system must serve to break the cycle of substance abuse, not merely interrupt it. If criminal justice officials—from the cop on the beat, to the prosecutor, to the defense attorney, to the judge on the bench, and the probation officer—work together and with their communities to find a range of alternatives, we will fix the failing system (Join Together, 1996).

Adult Offender Information

- Twenty-five to 40 percent of adult arrestees and 65 to 85 percent of incarcerated adult offenders need substance abuse treatment compared to only seven percent of the general population.
- Using these estimates of need among adult offenders and 1997 UCR data, an estimated 13,900 to 22,241 adult arrestees in Nebraska needed some level of substance abuse treatment
- Of the \$19,702,702 spent in Nebraska, four percent (\$788,108) was allocated to the adult criminal justice system through the Dept. of Corrections. There were no substance abuse dollars allocated to the courts or probation.
- The Bureau of Justice Assistance reported that drug courts diverting nonviolent defendants from jail time to treatment, could lower the recidivism rate, increase successful treatment outcomes, and save tax payers \$5000 per defendant in jail costs alone (Join Together, 1996).
- The Douglas County Adult Drug Court Evaluation reported that (Martin et al., 1999) (1) drug court offenders were less likely to be arrested than similar offenders who were processed traditionally and (2) the drug court resulted in an average savings of over \$4000 per felony drug-related case, as compared to traditional adjudication and sentencing

Juvenile Offender Information

- Sixty-five to 80 percent of juvenile offenders in the Youth Rehabilitation and Treatment Centers at Geneva and Kearney need substance abuse treatment compared to only five percent of the general population.
- Using these estimates of need among juveniles offenders and 1997 UCR data, an estimated 6,147 to 8,196 juvenile arrestees needed some level of substance abuse treatment in 1997.
- Of the \$19,702,702 spent in Nebraska on substance abuse and treatment, only one percent (\$189,675) was allocated to the juvenile justice system through the Office of Juvenile Services. There were no substance abuse dollars allocated to the courts or to probation.

Treatment Outcomes within the Department of Corrections

Program	Time Period	Number of Graduates	New Felony Convictions	Drug Violations (5-1-H)	Revocations
Nebraska Correctional Treatment Center	9/94 - 6/00	500	19 (3.8%)	19 (3.8%)	137 (27.4%)
Nebraska Correctional Center for Women	3/97 - 6/00	114	2 (1.8%)	13 (11.4%)	20 (17.5%)
Outpatient Treatment (SATOP)	10/96 - 6/00	761	27 (3.5%)	76 (10.0%)	72 (9.5%)

Contact William Schnackenberg at the Nebraska Department of Corrections, 402-471-4129 for more information on these statistics.

Information Provided by the Following Sources

Gernstein, D. & Johnson, R. 1994. *Evaluating Recovery Services: California Drug and Alcohol Treatment Assessment (CALDATA)*. Sacramento, CA: California Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs Resource Center.

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Join Together Policy Panel. 1996. *Fixing a Failing System: National Policy Recommendations*. Boston, MA: Join Together.

Martin, T.J., Spohn, C.C., Piper, R.K., & Robinson, J. 1999. *Phase II Douglas County Drug Court Evaluation: Final Report*. Omaha, NE: Institute for Social and Economic Development

National Institute on Drug Abuse. *Principles of Drug Addiction Treatment: A Research Guide*. 1999. Washington, D.C.: National Institute on Drug Abuse.